National Achievement Survey (NAS) 2025

***Prelims**: Current events of National and International Importance*

Why in the news?

The National Achievement Survey (NAS) 2025 results were recently released, and it was surprising to see Himachal Pradesh, which ranked 21st in 2021, leap into the top five.

- **National Achievement Survey (NAS)** – It is a national-level survey that measures the learning outcomes of students in government and government-aided schools in Classes 3, 5, 8, and 10.
- It tests core subjects such as language, mathematics, and science, providing States with data to inform policy.
- **Conducted by** - Ministry of Education (Every 3 years).
- **Story of Himachal Pradesh**
- **Historical Decline** - Himachal Pradesh once had a model public education system, initiated by the first CM, Y.S. Parmar.
    - **Post-independence** – This period witnessed the expansion of schools.
    - **Post-liberalization** - Due to systemic neglect and declining quality, this legacy was weakened.
- **Policy negligence** - Contractual hiring, under-recruitment, and lowered academic standards led to public distrust, and even rural families shifted to private schools, seeking better outcomes.

Measures taken

- **Policy changes** – The Government has pursued a mix of rational restructuring and renewed commitment to public education.
- **Consolidating resources** - Demographic shifts, declining fertility rate highlighted in the NFHS-5, the administration acted to consolidate resources.
- **Building infrastructure and staff deployment** - Allowing for the better deployment of teachers and infrastructure, more than 1,000 under-enrolled schools were merged.
- **Enhanced Monitoring and Guidelines** - The school education system was unified under a single directorate from pre-primary to Class 12, enhancing focus and accountability
- **Encouraging talent and merits** – By giving opportunities for exposure visits nationally and internationally to learn from innovative practices.
- **Other efforts** - School-level decision-making encouraged.
- To encourage peer learning, share resources, and community participation, a cluster-based model of school management was adopted.

- **Driving factor** - Himachal's achievement lies in rekindling faith in the idea of public education.
- **Future step** - Himachal could now deepen its commitment by regularizing teacher appointments, expanding holistic assessments, and ensuring that rural and marginalized students are not left behind.
- **Limitations of NAS** - It measures only what is easily testable, but broader aims of education, like socio-emotional well-being of students, the quality of teaching-learning relationships, are not captured.

Reference

The Hindu| National Achievement Survey (NAS) 2025

